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## Shore Birds at Westport, Wn.

next day. I was unable to secure any of these birds but they were easily identified especially when seen with the Black-bellied Plover.

Semi-palmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) -- This bird was common, many being seen each day. At low tide they fed on the large mud flats and were spread out so much that one did not notice how many there were of them. At high tide they were found in the more open places on the upper flats where a good idea of their numbers could be had.

Surf-bird (*Aphriza virgata*) -- A flock of about twenty birds were seen on the 4th, six birds on the 5th and 6th and two on the 8th. These birds were with flocks of Black Turnstones on the rock jetty at low tide. I never saw them at high tide and was unable to determine where they went when the rocks were covered, although I spent considerable valuable time trying to do so.

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres morinella*) -- The first birds of this species were seen on the 8th when five were observed in a flock of about fifty Red-backed Sandpipers. They increased each day and over three hundred birds were seen on the 23rd. Their feeding habits seemed to be the same as those of the Semi-palmated Plover with which they flocked more than with any other species. I saw only one mixed flock of these and Black Turnstones.

Black Turnstone (*Arenaria melanocephala*) -- This bird was seen each day; found with Surf-birds and Wandering Tattlers on the rock jetty at low tide. Also seen on the sand beach at high tide.

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## BRITISH COLUMBIA BIRD NOTES, 1920-1

by J. A. Munro

Okanagan Landing, December 13, 1920. -- A spurred Towhee was seen daily on the shrubbery near my house until December 13th.

December 25th. -- There is a little snow in the hills, but the lower benches and the lake-shore are bare. Early this morning a flock of ten Cassin's Purple Finch appeared in the brush on the margin of the lake. Later, fifteen Rocky Mountain Pine Grosbeaks were seen, only one of them being a red-plumaged male. This species has not been plentiful here since the winter of 1916-17. All these birds were feeding on the abundant supply of choke cherries that had dried on the trees in the intense heat of last August. There has been an irruption of Pygmy Owls (subsp.?) this month. They frequented the orchards and patches of deciduous second-growth and frequently were seen perched on fence-posts and telephone poles by the roadside. There did not appear to be more than the usual number in the heavy timber where these birds are usually found. The flocks of winter Juncos contain a larger per-cent of hyemalis than is usual. Until four years ago the type-form was quite uncommon in this locality. Specimens examined are indistinguishable from Ontario birds.

January 1st. -- Mild, with snow flurries. Rocky Mountain Pine Grosbeaks have been common during the past week. Large flocks of Bohemian Waxwings were seen flying over.

January 3rd. -- A male Richardson's Owl taken.

Victoria, B. C., January 8th -- Visited the Cedar Hill Provincial Game Farm. The energetic Game Warden in charge showed me a wooden frame near the pheasant pens, on which were hung the dried bodies of over one hundred hawks which he had shot or trapped during the late summer and autumn. The majority of these were Sharp-shins. The balance consisted of Goshawks, Cooper's Hawks, Sparrow Hawks and one Black Merlin. The Sharp-shinned Hawk is the most persistent winged enemy of the pheasants when the young birds are out, and I was told of one that had overtaken and struck down a full grown cock. I was surprised to learn that Sparrow Hawks frequently take and attempt to kill the young chicks.

Vancouver, January 12th -- The Japanese Starling has now spread as far as New Westminister and reports were received of damage done to strawberries and other small fruits last summer by this undesirable alien. At this season they feed largely on

horse droppings, but they also are unwelcome pensioners on the city poultry raisers, visiting the runs daily at feeding time. In the evenings they are seen crowded on the narrow ledges under the eaves on certain public buildings in the heart of the city and telephone wires are favorite resting places before going to roost. It is well known that in some localities Canada Geese are in the habit of nesting in Osprey's nests. Several pair have done so a vaseaux Lake for a number of years. Apparently the habit is more common than was generally supposed. It was reported to the Game Conservation Board by a reliable observer that on the west coast of Provost Island, (one of the Queen Charlotte group), it is the common method of nesting. The Queen Charlotte Island Marten is a beach-roaming animal, with the habits of a Mink and one wonders if they can be a factor in the arboreal nesting of the Geese.

Okanagon Landing, January 14th -- Small flocks of Cassin's Purple Finch in the brush on the lake shore and Goldfinches are common in the orchards, feeding on the seeds of Amaranthis.

January 20th -- Six Western Bluebirds alighted on the stony beach near my house and soon, restlessly, in short flights, drifted northward along the shore. Bohemian Waxwings were in the brush near at hand; an unusual mid-winter association.

January 24th -- A flock of Cassin's Purple Finch, estimated at forty, in the cottonwoods on the lake shore. They alighted on a bare space under the trees and for a few minutes searched busily for fallen seeds or perhaps for the crumbs that had been thrown there for the regular boarders, Juncos and Song Sparrows. After they had left, the fresh snow was covered with a fretwork of their delicate tracks. This is the only time I have seen a large flock in the winter, indeed winter records here are unusual. Ten Western Evening Grosbeaks visited these same cottonwoods half an hour later. Why have we been favoured with so many northern birds this mild winter?

Vancouver, February 5th -- It is reported that large flocks of Lesser Snow Geese are wintering off Sea Island and Lulu Island. Few of these birds have been killed as they remain well out of gun shot and pay no attention to decoys.

February 6th -- A cruise on Howe Sound around Bowen and Gambier Islands. A north wind, accompanied by driving rain made observations difficult and the number of birds recorded was probably much underestimated. Holboell's Grebe, 25; Western Grebe, 400; Horned Grebe, 15; Loon, 3; Pacific (?) Loon, 5; Pigeon Guillemot, 200; Marbled Murrelet, 300; California Murre, 150; Rhinoceros Auklet, 15; Glaucous-winged Gull, 1,000; Ring-billed Gull, 350; California Gull, 1; Red-breasted Merganser, 400; Hooded Merganser, 2; Surf Scoter, 3,000; White-winged Scoter, 800; American Scoter, 250; American Scaup, 2; American Golden-eye, 1; Great Blue Heron (subsp.?), 4; Coot, 3; Northwestern Crow, 100. The bird sanctuary of Burrard Inlet was thronged with water-fowl, and one noticed a considerable lessening in their numbers when the limit of the sanctuary was passed. Several Guillemots appeared to be in full summer plumage, others were half-way through the moult, but the majority were still in winter plumage.

Comox, February 12th -- A walk along the beach to Goose Spit was rather unproductive as far as seabirds were concerned. The herring run not being on, only a few birds were on the bay:- Surf and White-winged Scoters, Red-breasted Mergansers, Glaucous-winged Gulls, Short-billed Gulls, Loons and Western Grebes. A flock of black Brant was heard a long distance off and two Sanderlings were the only waders seen. In the brush, high up on the beach, at the edge of the timber, several pale-colored Fox Sparrows were seen and one favoured us with the first note of his summer song. Other land birds seen were, Northwestern Flicker, Seattle Wren, Western Winter Wren, Oregon Junco, Oregon Towhee, Song Sparrow, and the ubiquitous Northwestern Crow. In the sloughs and the river within the town limits of Courtenay were a number of very tame Mallards, American Scaups, Baldpates, Red-breasted Mergansers, Surf Scoters, American and Barrow's Golden-eyes; the latter being much less common than americana. Glaucous-winged Gulls were seen in several places, feeding in harmony with the domestic fowls, about the stables and out-houses.

February 14th -- Last night brought the first hard frost of the winter for this locality. This morning there was a large migration of Robins. At Oyster River I was much surprised to see a spotted Sandpiper running along the sand-spit at the

mouth of the river. The only other winter record I know of for British Columbia appears in Brooks - "The Birds of the Chilliwack District", where one is recorded on December 3, 1895 as "a very late record for this district."

Mr. R. M. Stewart of Comox informs me that he positively identified a drake European Widgeon feeding with a flock of Baldpate in Comox harbour on December 12, 1920 and again on December 15th.

Okanagan Landing, February 18th -- The stewards on the lake steamer have made a practice of feeding the Scaups that congregate about the wharf at this season. One band has become so tame they will swim rapidly towards the wharf at a whistle and feed with perfect unconcern a few yards from a crowd of interested onlookers. The larger bands that can be seen several hundred yards out from the shore are proof against the seduction of galley scraps and do not follow these tame birds when they paddle in for their dinner.

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#### MAMMAL NOTES FROM WRANGELL, ALASKA.

By G. Willett.

Owing to a scarcity of birds around Wrangell during the winter of 1920-21, the writer devoted part of his time to the mammals of the locality. A small number of traps were kept set during the greater part of the winter, resulting in the capture of about one hundred of the smaller mammals. The following is a brief account of the mammals observed between late September, 1920 and March 10, 1921, within five miles of the town of Wrangell.

The most valuable mammal of the region, the Sitka Deer (Odocoileus columbianus sitkensis), though quite plentiful on some of the neighboring islands, occurs only in rather small numbers in the vicinity of the town. Tracks were seen in the snow on several occasions, once or twice within a mile of town, but none were seen.

The pine squirrel (Sciurus hudsonicus vancouverensis) is very common in timber throughout the whole section and a number of specimens were preserved. The flying squirrel (Sciuropterus alpinus zaphaeus) is probably considerably less plentiful than the last but, as it is not in evidence in the daytime, it is, of course, a difficult matter to judge the comparative abundance of the two. Twenty-two specimens of the flying squirrel were taken in traps. Three of these, being badly damaged by mice, were discarded, the other nineteen being preserved. The bait generally used was the bodies of birds that had been skinned and to this the flying squirrels came readily. Some of them proved quite dexterous in stealing the bait without springing the trap but it was found that even the most skillful of the bait stealers could be caught by occasionally shifting the trap a few inches one way or the other. The easiest trap to catch them in was the No. 1 1/2 steel trap generally used for mink. A bad feature was, however, that they were usually considerably mangled when caught in this manner. Owing to the extreme fragility of the bones, if one was caught by one leg only, he generally tore loose, leaving his foot in the trap. Losing a foot in this manner did not seem to teach them the danger of the trap, as they invariably kept returning to the bait until they were caught. A few specimens were secured in rat traps baited with bacon rind but, as these could not be concealed, they were less sure than the steel traps.

Two species of mice, Peromyscus maniculatus macrorhinus and Evotomys wrangelli, were taken frequently, the latter appearing to be the most plentiful of the two. Signs of porcupine (Erethizon epixanthum nigrescens) were seen in several localities in the woods but none of the animals were noted and they were probably hibernating. The Alaska Wolf (Canis pambasileus) occurred occasionally within a short distance of the town, their tracks being in evidence in the snow and in the sand along the beach. One or two local parties reported seeing a wolf, but the writer personally observed none.

The Island Mink (Lutreola vison nesolestes) is still rather common on some parts